

LEWIS
EINSTEIN

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Within the Sacred Precincts of Diplomacy

The Case of Mr. Lewis Einstein

By GEORGE A. SCHREINER

THOUGH the case of Mr. Lewis Einstein is a remarkable one, it should not be assumed that it stands isolated in the history of diplomacy. After all, it is true that there is nothing new under the sun. Things are novel merely because succeeding generations learn of them, forget them again, and take pains not to profit by example. This applies especially to diplomacy.

Years ago, Mr. Einstein had been accredited by the United States Government to a small government in Latin-America as minister plenipotentiary. During the first part of the Wilson administration he had been stationed in Constantinople, but had left *persona non grata*. That is to say: He was no longer wanted by the Ottoman Government. The situation was expressed in as many words at the time. The State Department knew that perfectly well, because the reason was on record.

Great was the impression created when Mr. Einstein reappeared in Turkey early in the spring of 1915. The newspaperman was at the Dardanelles at the time. Though the officers of the batteries had more to do than speculate on the vanities of diplomacy, they made the entrance of Mr. Einstein the topic of many a mess conversation.

The Sublime Porte stared in surprise when Mr. Morgenthau suggested that Mr. Einstein be extended the usual diplomatic courtesies. Enver Pasha, Talaat Bey, and the grand vizier would not listen to any such proposition, and informed Mr. Morgenthau that it would be best to send Mr. Einstein whither he had come, to wit: Paris and London.

Mr. Morgenthau was not disinclined at first to do that. It was not plain to him just what sphere the new arrival was to fill. The embassy had a *conseiller*, and the requisite number of secretaries, reinforced by Captain R. H. Williams, United States Coast Artillery, now colonel on the general staff, who, in addition to having an undefined status as military attaché, attended to all the relief work that was being done at the time. Though the embassy was rather busy with all the people it had in its care, it cannot be said that anybody but the clerks worked himself to death. There was nothing to do for Mr. Einstein, and Mr. Morgenthau concluded, and the intruder promoted that impression diligently, that he was there largely to give good advice.

The embassy staff also objected to the presence of the "diplomatic agent," as Mr. Einstein was listed. None of this helped. Mr. Einstein installed himself in a little room above the stairs in the embassy chancery and waited for better times, as it seemed. That room was mostly locked at first. But each day the agent was a member of the male tea Mr. Morgenthau was in the habit of giving.

Mr. Einstein greeted the newspaperman heartily when he returned from the Dardanelles. But nothing came of the effusiveness. The next that happened was that the newspaperman was invited to the male tea, present among others being: The ambassador, Mr. Shamavonian, the first dragoman, and Mr. Antonian, another dragoman.

After a sip of tea, Mr. Einstein opened fire. What, exactly, was the state of affairs on the Dardanelles? How many batteries, new emplacements, guns, shells; what had been the effect of the big bombardment of March 18; in what state of morale were the Turkish gunners; to what extent were they commanded by Germans; was anything known of the torpedo batteries at Kilid-il-Bahr; in what shape was the mine field and how extensive was it; what were the means of observation of the Turks; just where could the famous howitzer batteries be found, how were they moved about? As fine a line of vital military information as could be set out!

Evasive answers and negatives being all that came Mr. Einstein's way, the duties of citizenship of the newspaperman were referred to. The reply was that the newspaperman had many other duties, that is, he could not make himself impossible with the Turks in the interest of the news service which he represented, nor could he run the personal risk, since he stood under Ottoman military law; lastly, he was not in the habit of abusing the confidence of those whose guest he was. The newspaperman stated that all he was permitted to say had gone through the hands of the censors, and was known in the embassy.

Mr. Einstein was not satisfied with that. The embassy had a right to know. Were it not that a tea, even among men, is supposed to be a polite affair, hard words might have been passed back and forth ere long. Anyway, enough had been learned.

So far not a single American on the Bosphorus had been molested by the Turkish Government. Very soon it was to be different. A British submarine sneaked into the port of Constantinople and under the very nose of the Sublime Porte blew up, in broad daylight, a coal

barge moored at a quay in Haider Pasha. That settled it. The Turkish Government ordered a search of all houses at Robert College, at Arnautkoi, and wherever Americans lived. But nothing suspicious was found.

The Alibabi would have liked to get into the American embassy, and especially into Mr. Einstein's room, but that would have been equivalent to a declaration of war. It was to be the turn of the United States small cruiser, "Scorpion," the American *stationnaire* in the port. The cruiser had been tied to the wharf below Top Haneh, and none had even dared to imply that Captain J. P. Morton had dealings with the enemies of Turkey. In fact, that was never stated, but the port authorities insisted that the "Scorpion" station herself henceforth between the old and new bridges across the Golden Horn. It was the safety of the cruiser that was in the mind of the authority, as it was put. The actual reason was another, though an entirely unfounded one. Captain Morton had always been what a naval officer of a friendly nation ought to be—courteous, correct and most tactful.

Meanwhile, Mr. Lansing had been asked to please take Mr. Einstein away. But the Secretary of State remained mute. The agent's attitude was one of *J'y suis, J'y reste*, and he did not budge. But there is an end to all things. Ultimately, Mr. Einstein left for parts unknown, to wit: Paris and London.

There were many persons in Constantinople at that time who were not especially fond of the Turk and his rule. Mr. Einstein made the tactical mistake of consorting with them more than a tactful diplomatist would have done, and the good men and women of non-Turk origin did their best to have it known that they were in the swim with the American diplomatic agent. The hopes of the Greeks and Armenians were personified in Mr. Einstein, and when the *Agence Tattila* had a particularly pleasant rumor, the name of the agent was associated with it. In the cafés it was whispered that within a few days the British and French would be in the city, and Mr. Einstein was quoted as the author of the tale. When Mr. Einstein was gone none was happier than the regular staff of the embassy—from ambassador down to the least *cavass*.

In the course of time, the newspaperman went to Sofia to attend a further widening of the war. It had become known to him that the Bulgarians were about to join the Central Powers.

In the Bulgarian capital the following interesting



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A GENERAL VIEW OF CONSTANTINOPLE

The possession of this city has long been a bone of contention. Many European statesmen have wanted to drive out the Turk bag and baggage, but there have always been interests to interfere.